



U.S. Environmental Protection Agency Great Lakes National Program Office Significant Activities Report

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Lake Guardian Springs Into Action

In its first cruise of the year, the Great Lakes National Program Office's 180-foot research ship, the *R/V Lake Guardian*, departed its berth in Milwaukee Harbor, Wisconsin on April 3rd for the Spring Water Quality Survey of the Great Lakes. EPA scientists took samples for water chemistry and biology at 72 sites throughout the Great Lakes. These samples continue a long-term monitoring effort begun in 1983 to assess the condition of the Great Lakes and provide information on chemical and biological trends in each of the lakes. While the *Lake Guardian* sampled all the regular locations in all of the lakes, only the basic long-term monitoring samples were collected and ship time could not be provided for any outside



GLNPO's Dr. Glenn Warren (left) answers questions on the *R/V Lake Guardian*'s mission from WGN Superstation's Tom Skilling.

investigators due to budget constraints. The financial crunch which will limit the *Lake Guardian*'s use this year and next is caused by a costly mandatory dry dock inspection and repairs that the ship will have to undergo in the Fall of 2005. Despite occasional delays due to springtime gales on the lakes, the survey was completed ahead of schedule on April 23rd.

Learn more about the *R/V Lake Guardian* is available on the Internet at: <http://www.epa.gov/glnpo/guard/ship.html>

(Contact: Glenn Warren, 312-886-2405, warren.glenn@epa.gov)

Weather or Not

As gale force winds blew on Lake Michigan, GLNPO's *R/V Lake Guardian* was visited in Chicago on April 29th by meteorologist Tom Skilling of WGN television. (WGN is carried nationwide as a cable and satellite TV "superstation.") Mr. Skilling was given a tour of the ship and was an en-

thusiastic guest, asking many questions about the lakes, the ship and the personnel performing the *Lake Guardian's* work. Being on the lee shore (nautical-speak for the side that's not so windy) for the gales allowed us to steam a short distance into the lake, where scientists and crew demonstrated sampling equipment and discussed the uses of the equipment and the environmental samples collected.

Video footage was taken of all these activities, as well as interviews that Mr. Skilling conducted with Paul Horvatin, Glenn Warren, Judy Beck and Dr. Matt Simcik of the University of Minnesota. Dr. Simcik was aboard the *Lake Guardian* taking water samples for analysis of toxic contaminants, including PCB's, mercury, pesticides, brominated flame retardants and other chemicals. The resulting story was aired on May 18th in Mr. Skilling's "Ask Tom" segment on WGN. A transcript of the story is available on WGN's Web Site at: <http://wgntv.trb.com/wgntv-news-051804asktom,0,3542112.story?coll=wgntv-home-1>

(Contacts: Paul Horvatin, 312-353-3612, horvatin.paul@epa.gov; or Glenn Warren, 312-886-2405, warren.glenn@epa.gov)

Passage to India

During mid-April, GLNPO's Frank Anscombe joined Arthur Dungan and Bill Rankin of the Chlorine Institute as U.S. contributors to a meeting hosted by the Alkali Manufacturers' Association of India (AMAI). They shared their own perspectives on reducing consumption of mercury at U.S. chlor-alkali factories. (Since 1997, U.S. factories have gone beyond compliance with existing regulations and reduced consumption of mercury by 70 %.) Their purpose was to promote dissemination of



AMAI workshop attendees at the Taj Mahal

world-class environmental management practices within this global industrial sector.

Anscombe and Rankin had previously participated in a similar meeting held by the chlor-alkali association of Latin America in September 2003. Among the 60 attendees at the AMAI meeting were representatives from 16 factories in India that use a production process that employs flowing liquid mercury in the electrolytic manufacture of chlorine and caustic soda from brine. Also participating were two experts from the European chlor-alkali industry and another from Brazil. A field trip to a factory located in the city of Kota rounded out AMAI's meeting.

Some of Frank's impressions from the AMAI meeting:

- AMAI's recent progress and clear commitment to improvement are encouraging. Indian factories have reduced replenishment mercury by 50 percent during the past four years. More progress is possible, because consumption is four times higher than factories in the United States.
- India has more mercury cell factories than any other nation, though these are smaller scale than ones typical of the

- United States and Europe.
- The government of India has strongly urged Indian firms that operate mercury cell factories to build new ones that do not rely on mercury. Some AMAI companies indeed plan capital investments in new factories. However, experience from many other nations suggests that some other AMAI firms may not have the financial resources to build new factories and discard existing ones. This being so, the aim of our visit was to promote best practices at operating factories for as long as these continue to serve the economy of India.
 - There are low cost ways for factories to reduce mercury consumption. For instance, adoption of ultraviolet-spectrum lights can reveal mercury vapor leaks not visible under normal lighting. Such inexpensive lights can empower workers to find and plug vapor leaks.

While in India, Anscombe also met with two environmental groups in Delhi, as well as with members of the Indian government's Ministry of Environment and Forests.

(Contact: Frank Anscombe, 312-353-0201, anscombe.frank@epa.gov)

Marking World Water Day

On March 22nd, Gary Gulezian, GLNPO Director, and Roy Angelow from Environment Canada spoke at a luncheon at the Canadian Embassy in Washington, DC. The luncheon event was co-sponsored by Federal Water Quality Association, an affiliate of the Water Environment Federation and the Canadian Embassy as part of celebrating World Water Day. Gary's presentation on "The Great Lakes Program" provided the history of Great Lakes environmental issues and actions from the 1960s to the present. Roy

Angelow from Environment Canada then followed with details about Canada's efforts in Great Lakes protection.

(Contact: Gary Gulezian, 312-886-4040, gulezian.gary@epa.gov)

Celebrating Earth Day

GLNPO staff participated in a number of Earth Day events this year. Some highlights include:

On Earth Day, April 22nd, the final session of the 2003-04 Great Lakes Seminar Series at the School of Natural Resources and Environment was held in Ann Arbor, Michigan. This was the final event in what has been a year-long examination of various Great Lakes restoration issues. Dave Cowgill participated on a panel of representatives from a variety of agencies and organizations with a role in Great Lakes restoration. Panelists explained their agency/organization's role in restoration and identified their restoration priorities. EPA's role with the U.S. Policy Committee and the Great Lakes Strategy 2002 was pre-



Spaceship Earth as seen from Apollo 10.
(photo courtesy of NASA)

sented, along with a summary of the LAMP and RAP/AOC activities. The need for utilizing our programs at basin-wide, lake-wide and local levels was emphasized. Other panelists explored the implications of proposed Great Lakes legislation, and the likelihood of a comprehensive Great Lakes restoration bill being passed by Congress.

(Contact: Dave Cowgill, 312-353-3576, cowgill.david@epa.gov).

Also on Earth Day, Jacqueline Fisher spoke to an audience in USEPA's Chicago regional office on Environmental Health Issues in the Great Lakes Basin as part of an Earth Day environmental topics panel.

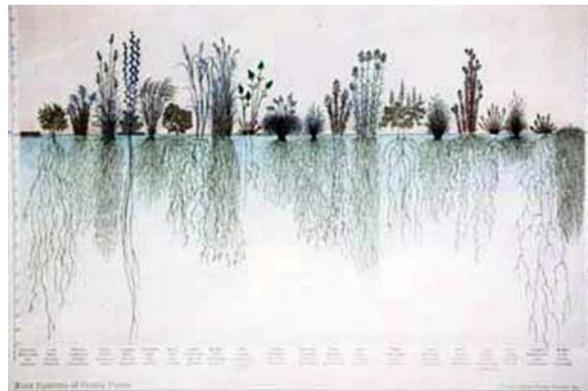
(Contact: Jacqueline Fisher, 312-353-1481, fisher.jacqueline@epa.gov)

On April 23rd, Danielle Green served as an EPA Ambassador in giving an educational presentation at Burley School, a Chicago Public School. She spoke about pollution and the Great Lakes to 2 classes of first graders, and then told an eighth grader class about the health effects of pollution and strategies to prevent pollution. Each classroom's teacher received a tool box with environmental educational materials, as well as coloring books, seed packets, posters and pencils made of recycled money. Finally, Danielle spoke to the school about Earth Day in marking the one-year anniversary celebration for the school's prairie garden.

On April 24th, Danielle Green helped staff USEPA's outreach booth at the Chicago Park District and Friends of the Park day-long Earth Day celebration at Humboldt Park in Chicago. The event included schools, environmental groups and others in cleanup activities, tree planting, birdhouse building and a variety of entertainment.

(Contact: Danielle Green, 312-886-7594, green.danielle@epa.gov)

This Landscaping is a Natural



The deep roots of native plants mean they need little or no irrigation.

If you ever wondered what “natural landscaping” was or how to get started, GLNPO's Web Site contains a new “Natural Landscaping Tool Kit” that can provide you the answers. Native plants provide a beautiful, hardy, drought resistant, low maintenance landscape while benefiting the environment. The Tool Kit contains 50 slides defining natural landscaping, explaining its benefits, illustrating natural landscaping applications, and demonstrating installation and management techniques. The Tool Kit can be found at: <http://www.epa.gov/glnpo/greenacres/tooltestkit/index.html>

(Contact: Danielle Green, 312-886-7594, green.danielle@epa.gov)

From Flower to Seed

The North Branch Restoration Project is a volunteer organization working to restore and manage the few remaining savannas, woodlands, forests and prairies along the North Branch of the Chicago River in the Cook County Forest Preserves. The volunteers assist the Forest Preserve District of Cook County and other agencies in protect-

ing and restoring native Illinois ecosystems. Through their hands-on work, the North Branch Restoration Project volunteers have developed a fabulous Seed Photo Project, tracking a variety of native plants from first flower to seed. Information on each plant includes details on when to pick the seeds. This is intended to guide seed harvesting efforts for restoration, but can also be used in your own yard. Remember to never pick seeds from the wild without permission from the landowner. We thank the North Branch Restoration Project for their generosity in sharing this work with us. See the Seed Photo Project online at: <http://www.epa.gov/glnpo/greenacres/plants/index.html>

(Contact: Danielle Green, 312-886-7594, green.danielle@epa.gov)



Jack-in-the-Pulpit, one of the plants included in the "North Branch Restoration Project Native Plant and Seed Collection."



Updated Visualizing the Great Lakes photo collection is online now

Photo Collection Updated

GLNPO's image collection on the Web has been updated. It contains the six original categories (Natural Resources, Scenic, Recreation around the Great Lakes, Issues affecting the Great Lakes, Management of the Great Lakes, and Commerce and Development) with plans to add a *Lake Guardian* Category and a Native Landscaping category. Interesting plankton photos have been added to the collection as well.

A section explaining how these photos may be used by the general public is included. High resolution copies of the photos may be downloaded. See the collection at: <http://www.epa.gov/glnpo/image/>

(Contact: Deborah Lamberty, 312-886-6691, lamberty.deborah@epa.gov)

Rotary Talk

GLNPO's Lake Michigan Team Manager, Judy Beck, made a presentation to the Rotary International lunch group in Glenview, Illinois on March 30th. She gave an overview of the status of the Lake Michigan ecosystem and the Great Lakes. The majority of the follow up questions focused on aquatic nuisance species and the state of ground water in the Lake Michigan basin.

(Contact: Judy Beck, 312-353-3849, beck.)

judy@epa.gov)

Canadian P2 Roundtable

Ted Smith participated in the Canadian Pollution Prevention Roundtable in Ottawa, Ontario, Canada on April 28th and 29th where he presented “A Binational Toxics Strategy Perspective on Emerging Chemicals.” Other speakers/presentations included, Jennifer Hounsell of the RiverSides Stewardship Alliance who presented Eco-System Hypertension Prevention – Getting Our Rivers Off Salt, and Nick De Carlo of the Canadian Auto Workers, who presented on Emerging Chemicals from the “Front Line,” an occupational perspective on the hazards of emerging pollutants.

(Contact: Ted Smith, 312-353-6571, smith.edwin@epa.gov)

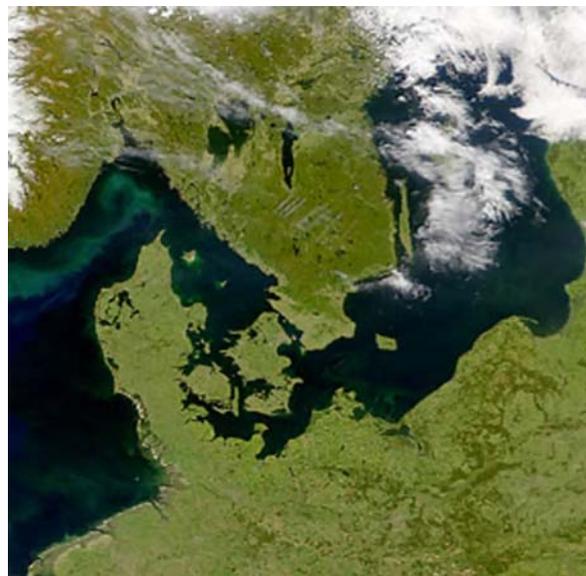
Black Lagoon Sediment Cleanup Proposed

On April 29th, a public meeting was held in Trenton, Michigan to inform the local community about the plans for the proposed Black Lagoon, Trenton Channel sediment remediation project. Marc Tuchman made a presentation on the Great Lakes Legacy Act, and the Michigan DEQ and the Corps of Engineers provided details on the proposed project plan. Michigan DEQ has submitted an application to GLNPO for remediation of this site under the Great Lakes Legacy Act. Following remediation, the City of Trenton is planning to redevelop the site as a marina. Assistance for planning the meeting was also provided by Rose Ellison of GLNPO, and Don de Blasio of USEPA Region 5’s Office of Public Affairs. Overall, the proposed project was well received by the local community. It is anticipated that if all goes according to schedule, the proposed remediation project could commence by this Fall.

(Contact: Marc Tuchman, 312-353-1369, tuchman.marc@epa.gov)

Baltic Sea-Great Lakes Workshop

A Baltic Sea-Great Lakes Workshop on Aquatic Invasive Species workshop was held in Ann Arbor, Michigan on April 27th to 29th. The main purpose of the workshop was to bring together researchers and managers from both sides of the Atlantic to begin discussion on areas of cooperation and collaboration. Specific areas raised for mutual support included: early detection and monitoring; rapid response; methods to raise the profile of invasive species issues for the public and legislators; and looking at creative funding mechanisms to get research accomplished. The meeting was well attended by representatives of North America as well as Baltic, Scandinavian and other European countries. The workshop was funded by Region 5 Office of International Activities via a grant to the Great Lakes Commission. Vacys Saulys from USEPA Region 5’s Office of International Activities provided opening remarks to the workshop,



The Baltic Sea shares many of the same problems, including invasive species. (photo courtesy of NASA)

while GLNPO's Dr. Marc Tuchman moderated a session on opportunities for Baltic Sea-Great Lakes collaboration.

(Contact: Marc Tuchman, 312-353-1369, tuchman.marc@epa.gov)

Quality First

GLNPO's Quality Assurance Manager, Lou Blume continues to share his insights and enthusiasm on the implementation of Quality Assurance procedures to ensure the integrity of environmental monitoring and modeling efforts. This time Lou traveled to Tampa, Florida on April 15th to speak about "Measures of Quality System Implementation" at the 23rd Annual Conference on Managing Environmental Quality Systems. Lou's presentation was extremely well received. The new head of USEPA's national quality program told Lou that he plans to use the information developed in this presentation as guidance for his staff and has asked him to give a similar presentation to USEPA's Science Policy Board meeting in July.

(Contact: Lou Blume, 312-353-2317, blume.louis@epa.gov)

Upcoming Events	
2004	
June 17	Great Lakes Binational Toxics Strategy Stakeholder Forum: Toronto, Canada
October 6-8	State of the Lakes Ecosystem Conference: Toronto, Canada
2005	
November 30	Great Lakes Binational Toxics Strategy Stakeholder Forum: Chicago, IL

We welcome your questions, comments or suggestions about this month's Significant Activities Report. To be added to or removed from the Email distribution of the Significant Activities Report, please contact Tony Kizlauskas, 312-353-8773, kizlauskas.anthony@epa.gov.